

photo ID is now required to vote in person. To learn more about what it means to you please visit our press release and the photo identification section



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## Required Identification for Voting in Person

### Frequently Asked Questions

In 2011, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 14 (SB 14) creating a new requirement for voters to show photo identification when voting in person. While pending review within the judicial system, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which effectively ended all pending litigation. As a result, **voters are now required to present an approved form of photo identification in order to vote in all Texas Elections.**

**This requirement is effective immediately.**

**Here is a list of the acceptable forms of photo ID:**

- Texas driver license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS
- Texas concealed handgun license issued by DPS
- United States military identification card containing the person's photograph
- United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States passport

With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the identification must be current or have expired no more than 60 days before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place.

### Procedures for Voting

When a voter arrives at a polling location, the voter will be asked to present one of the seven (7) acceptable forms of photo ID. Election officials will now be required by State law to determine whether the voter's name on the identification provided matches the name on the official list of registered voters ("OLRV"). After a voter presents their ID, the election worker will compare it to the OLRV. If the name on the ID matches the name on the list of registered voters, the voter will follow the regular procedures for voting.

If the name does not match exactly but is "substantially similar" to the name on the OLRV, the voter will be permitted to vote as long as the voter signs an affidavit stating that the voter is the same person on the list of registered voters.

If a voter does not have proper identification, the voter will still be permitted to vote provisionally. The voter will have (six) 6 days to present proper identification to the county voter registrar, or the voter's ballot will be rejected.

### Exemption/Exceptions:

Voters with a disability may apply with the county voter registrar for a **permanent exemption**. The application must contain written documentation from either the U.S. Social Security Administration evidencing he or she has been determined to have a disability, or from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs evidencing a disability rating of at least 50 percent. In addition, the applicant must state that he or she has no valid form of photo identification. Those who obtain a disability exemption will be allowed to vote by presenting a voter registration certificate reflecting the exemption. Please contact your voter registrar for more details.

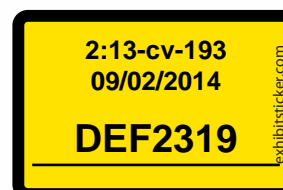
Voters who have a consistent **religious objection** to being photographed and voters who do not have any valid form of photo identification as a result of certain natural disasters as declared by the President of the United States or the Texas Governor, may vote a provisional ballot, appear at the voter registrar's office within six (6) calendar days after election day, and sign an affidavit swearing to the religious objection or natural disaster, in order for your ballot to be counted. Please contact your county voter registrar for more details.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. When does the new photo identification law go into effect?

The new photo identification requirement is effective immediately.

#### 2. What kind of identification will be required to qualify to vote in person under the new program?



A voter will be required to show one of the following forms of photo identification at the polling location before the voter will be permitted to cast a vote.

- Texas driver license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal identification card issued by DPS
- Texas concealed handgun license issued by DPS
- United States military identification card containing the person's photograph
- United States citizenship certificate containing the person's photograph
- United States passport

### **3. My ID is expired. Will it still work?**

With the exception of the U.S. citizenship certificate, the identification must be current or have expired no more than 60 days before being presented for voter qualification at the polling place.

### **4. But what if a voter does not have any of these forms of photo ID? Are there any exceptions?**

If a voter does not have a permanent disability exemption (addressed below) indicated on his or her voter registration certificate AND the voter does not have any of the photo identifications indicated above at the time of voting, the voter may cast a provisional ballot at the polls. However, in order to have the provisional ballot counted, the voter will be required to visit the voter registrar's office within six calendar days of the date of the election to either present one of the above forms of photo ID OR submit one of the temporary affidavits addressed below (e.g., religious objection or natural disaster) in the presence of the county voter registrar while attesting to the fact that he or she does not have any of the required photo IDs.

A **permanent exemption** is available for voters with documented disabilities. Voters with a disability may apply with the county voter registrar for a permanent exemption. The application must contain written documentation from either the U.S. Social Security Administration evidencing the applicant's disability, or from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs evidencing a disability rating of at least 50 percent. In addition, the applicant must state that he or she has no valid form of photo identification. Those who obtain a disability exemption will be allowed to vote by presenting a voter registration certificate reflecting the exemption.

Affidavits are available for voters who have a consistent religious objection to being photographed and for voters who do not have any photo identification as a result of certain natural disasters as declared by the President of the United States or the Texas Governor within 45 days of the day the ballot was cast.

### **5. If I have a government-issued ID that contains my photo and it is not on the list above, may I use it?**

If you do not have one of the forms of photo IDs listed above and your voter registration certificate does not have a disability exemption noted, you will only be eligible to cast a provisional ballot.

### **6. My name on my approved photo ID does not exactly match my name on my voter registration card. Can I still vote?**

Election officials will review the ID and if a name is "substantially similar" to the name on their list of registered voters, you will still be able to vote, but you will also have to submit an affidavit stating that you are the same person on the list of registered voters.

### **7. What does "substantially similar" mean?**

A voter's name is considered substantially similar if one or more of the following circumstances applies:

1. The name on the ID is slightly different from one or more of the name fields on the official list of registered voters.
2. The name on the voter's ID or on list of registered voters is a customary variation of the voter's formal name. For example, Bill for William, or Betó for Alberto.
3. The voter's name contains an initial, middle name, or former name that is either not on the official list of registered voters or on the voter's ID.
4. A first name, middle name, former name or initial of the voter's name occupies a different field on the presented ID document than it does on the list of registered voters.

In considering whether a name is substantially similar, election officials will also look at whether information on the presented ID matches elements of the voter's information on the official list of registered voters such as the voter's residence address or date of birth.

### **8. Does the new photo ID requirement apply to voting by mail?**

The new requirement does not change the process for voting by mail.

### **9. Does the address on my photo identification have to match my address on the official list of registered voters at the time of voting?**

The new requirement makes no determination on voter address matching criteria; therefore, there is no address matching requirement.

### **10. When is the DPS Election Identification Certificate going to be available?**

The Election Identification Certificate is now available. Information regarding how to obtain an election identification certificate can be found at [www.dps.texas.gov](http://www.dps.texas.gov) (<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/DriverLicense/electionID.htm>). You may also contact DPS by telephone at (512) 424-2600 for more information.

**11. What happens if I refuse to show proof of identity?**

Voters who refuse to show proof of identity will be allowed to vote by provisional ballot. However, please be advised that a refusal to show ID is not a valid ground for casting a provisional ballot, and it is likely that the voter's ballot will be rejected by the ballot board.

We hope you have found this information helpful. Should you need additional information, please contact our office via telephone at 1-800-252-VOTE (8683) or via email at [elections@sos.state.tx.us](mailto:elections@sos.state.tx.us) (<mailto:elections@sos.state.tx.us>).

**Not Registered?**

To vote in Texas, you must be registered. Simply pick up a [voter registration application](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqvr.shtml) (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqvr.shtml>), fill it out, and mail it at least 30 days before the election date.  
[MORE ABOUT REGISTRATION >](http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqvr.shtml)  
(<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/reqvr.shtml>)

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**Voting is easy, so is getting the facts**

Texans must show an approved photo ID when voting in person.  
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**(800) 252-VOTE** [www.sos.state.tx.us](http://www.sos.state.tx.us) (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us>)

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